

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

THE men are coming home on leave from the armies, back to the glad shores of Britain after long years of separation from home and family. Some will be here for Christmas—perhaps the last Christmas of this long and bitter struggle.

Their homecoming is a symbol to all the nation of the tremendous feats which Britain's men have performed — millions under arms, millions more in the factories. Never in human history has there been such a mobilisation dedicated to one supreme task; never has the world seen such a surrender of home, and family, and friends, in a crusade against the evil things of life.

Back to the Familiar Streets

Many are coming home for the first time in their overseas service. They will see a Britain ravaged and tested by her experiences, a Britain where the little homes and great have alike offered and sacrificed their all. They will walk familiar streets where the old landmarks have disappeared. They will find their home towns torn and dislocated, but still proud and undaunted. This is a homecoming of mingled tears and laughter, of grief mixed with pride. Here is a harvest of war in all its poignant tragedy gathered out of the life of the people. These returning men will see it all with fresh eyes.

THIS homecoming at Christmastime is a reminder to Britain of her immense reservoir of manhood which, drawn on in the hour of danger, has proved itself made of the finest material, tested in the fires of war. It is, indeed, a humiliating thought that in the period between the wars so many men were condemned to idleness, wasting their heritage of strength in years of unemployment. In those years no great, absorbing tasks were placed before the country's manhood to demand their full capacities both of mind and body. So there settled on our nation a vast lethargy with the ancient fires of freedom and daring damped down. Britain was believed to be decadent.

But the men now coming home have proved to all the world that, given a task, given a challenge, given a plan, Britain can still achieve what was deemed impossible—have shown that the old spirit of adventure still lives in British hearts. The world has seen them leaping to the struggle, cast down in defeat but not destroyed, carrying on the grim fight, confident that it is the last battle which wins final victory.

The Leaders of Tomorrow

These men now coming home are those to whom we must look for leadership in the days to come. Somewhere in their ranks are the new leaders in industry, the new Members of Parliament, the captains of commerce, and the counsellors of state. In the ranks of these tried and trusted men we must seek for that true leadership which shall keep the soul of Britain burnished brightly, and match her actions with her ideals.

UPON Britain rests vast responsibility for the shaping of a new world. Britain cannot live up to that responsibility, however, unless she discovers young leaders. Out of the winter blackness of the past years there must emerge a noble company ready to serve the country and the people with all their dedicated zeal. Britain needs men of unalloyed quality

who will give their time and energy to the tasks ahead, caring not for personal gain but for the common good, believing in their mission, sure in their faith.

These men now coming home for a respite from the grim business of war are the new masters of the world. They and their comrades of the United Nations have in their keeping the peace and order of the world so far as it rests in human hands. Men can be masters in a brutal, Nazi fashion, or masters in a righteous and gentle manner which seeks the good of each nation and brings into the common life of all the contribution of each. The war is being won in that spirit, and only in that spirit can the peace be won.

It will take men of high dedication and resolve to win through the entanglements of peacemaking to the broad and fair uplands of world-friendship. Our leaders on this hard road to the sunny places must be men who have borne the burden and overcome the weariness of the battle. With the tried skill of the warrior they must blend the gentler methods of the peacemaker. In this all-important task they will be the true masters of the world, spanning the frontiers by a common experience and a common struggle against evil, united as free men in the making of a free world.

The Song of the Angels

The nation expects much of the men whose hearts and minds turn homeward to Britain at this Christmastime. Those who are fortunate enough to come home now are the vanguard of a host which will eagerly restore the strained ranks of British manhood and bring fresh vigour into all the halls and chambers of our national life. They will come into darkened homes and saddened lives with a touch of the angel song of Christmas. They are messengers of that hope and gladness in

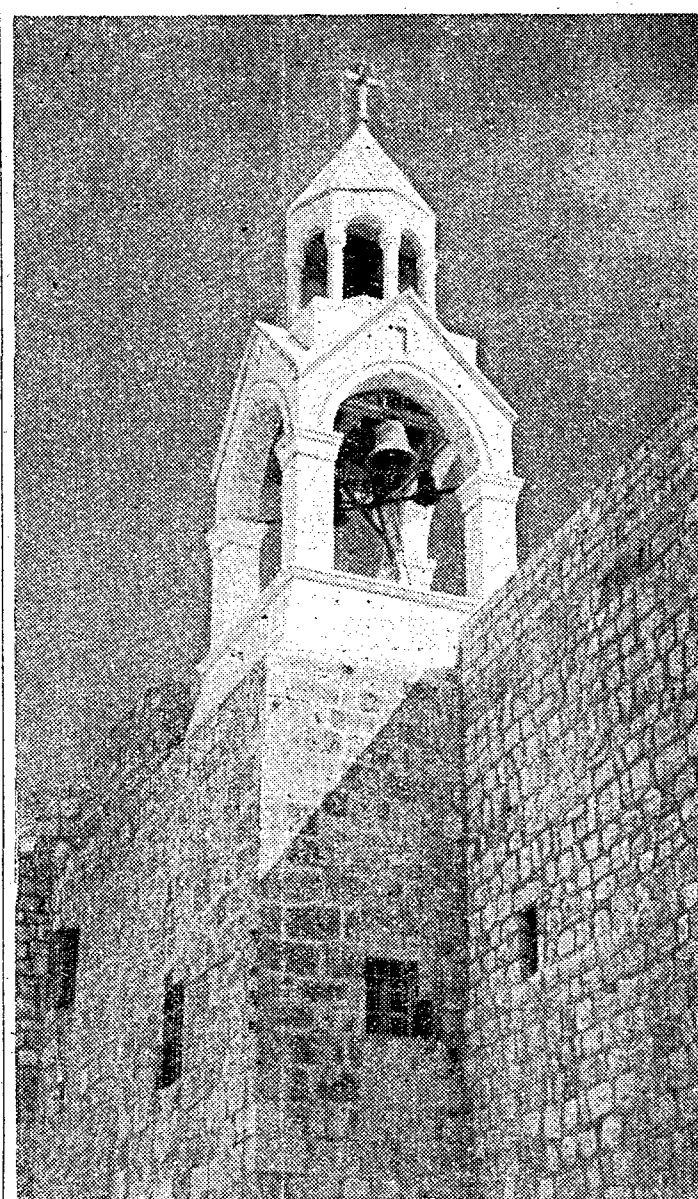
*That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King."*

Peace is the first desire of the home-comers, but not a peace of ease and retreat. There can be no true peace along that road in the years to come. The peace to come will be a hard, stern peace in which righteousness and truth will be exalted and in which men will walk without fear. That is the peace of which the angels sing—a peace where honour, truth, and love are respected, and where men of all the nations speak as brother unto brother:

*When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.*

LET that be our greeting to the men home from the battlefields, the ships, the tanks, the aeroplanes. These men come from handling the machines of war—a grim task they had to undertake if the song of the angels was not to be silenced for ever. Through their efforts we may now sing the Christmas hymns with thanksgiving, believing that the same valour and courage will be given to the making of a new world—a world in which all nations in universal harmony shall sing the angels' song.

CHILDREN'S EVERY
TUESDAY 3d
NEWSPAPER
POSTAGE
Inland 1d
Abroad 1d
No 1344
FOUNDED BY ARTHUR MEE



The Bells of Bethlehem

Here are the bells whose message the B B C broadcasts at Christmas. They are in the tower of the Armenian Church of Bethlehem.

BACK FROM THE WARS

Nor long ago a great white ship with Red Crosses painted on its sides docked in the port of Freetown, in Sierra Leone. On the quayside bands were playing and the Governor was waiting to give an official reception. All Freetown seemed to have turned out to welcome this first hospital ship to bring home sick and wounded West African soldiers.

The soldier-patients were some of those who have enlisted as volunteers in the famous Royal West African Frontier Force, and who have been serving beside British and Allied comrades in the Middle East and Burma.

For these men, as for many British soldiers invalided out of the Army, the fighting is over. They will get their disablement

pensions, artificial limbs if they need them, and special remedial and occupational training to fit them for civilian life. Then they go home to their families.

The spirit of determination and comradeship which stood these ex-soldiers so well in battle is going to help their home-peoples in years to come. While they were still on the long voyage home, their nurses were struck by their cheerfulness and helpfulness. Those men who could do no more as yet would practise their knitting of scarves and jumpers. The Matron, a Suffolk woman, said, "It was a constant cry on the ship, 'Matron, I want more wool.'" This Matron and her nurses are proud to have served such men.

A NEW CHAPTER IN THE DRAMA OF THE SAAR

It is one of the major ironies of History that Saarland should be the part of Germany into which the Forces of Freedom have been making their most spectacular advance. For only ten years ago the Saar was a symbol of a lasting peace in Europe.

In January, 1935, all the nations of Europe willingly took part in ensuring that the people of Saarland should be free to vote on whether they should become German citizens. Even America was indirectly concerned in this famous plebiscite, for 350 persons who had left Saarland since 1914 crossed the Atlantic to record their votes. One wonders where these 350 are now, and whether any of them or their sons are in the American Armies which are liberating Saarland from the Nazi yoke.

Saarland, as the Germans call it, includes the greater part of the basin of the River Saar and lies between French Lorraine and Oldenburg. Its area is 742 square miles and its population, partly Prussian, partly Bavarian, in 1939 totalled 863,736, the densest in any German State except Hamburg and Bremen. Saarbrücken the chief town, with some 135,000 people, is the centre of a most important coal-field and a steel industry which is only second to that of the Ruhr in all Germany.

It was because of this vast mineral wealth that under the Treaty of Versailles the Saar basin was handed over for exploitation by the French in compensation for the ruthless destruction by the Germans of France's northern coalmines. The treaty placed this area under the control, until 1934, of the League of Nations, which appointed a Commission of five as governors. The Saar people were then to vote for remaining under the League, joining

France, or rejoining Germany—but the mines were to continue in French hands, while the Saar region was to remain unfortified.

So eloquently did Adolf Hitler plead the cause of the return to the Fatherland and so keen were the French and British in letting bygones be bygones that they did all they could to ensure a free and fair vote, arranging for soldiers from many lands to join the international police force (the first in history) in the Saar to give confidence to the inhabitants.

In order to solve the ownership problem of the mines the French offered to sell them to Germans, and this was amicably settled at £12,000,000 before the voting took place.

The poll resulted in 477,119 votes for a return to Germany out of the 525,005 votes cast. Hitler was exultant.

"I declare," he said, "that Germany will make no further territorial demands upon France."

"We want to assure the world of our deep desire to preserve the peace, just as we are determined to win back our equality of rights to the fullest measure, just as we are determined afterwards to co-operate fully in the creation and preservation of that international solidarity which is essential for the welfare of the peoples of the world."

Yet within a very brief while the Saarlanders were working might and main under their Nazi despots to furnish munitions of war for use against those very nations which had so loyally worked for their happiness.

Improving Our Western Waterways

PLANS have been made to improve the River Severn for navigation so that trading vessels and coasters of 600-ton capacity and specially-built craft up to 800 tons can at all times travel up this river as far as Worcester, 27 miles from Birmingham.

This great river, which rises in Montgomeryshire and flows in a great curve to the Bristol Channel, could thus serve as a direct trade link between the Midlands and the Continent of Europe.

The plans include the deepening of the river at a number of points, enlarging six locks, and reconstructing or altering seven bridges, among them Westgate Bridge at Gloucester and Worcester Bridge.

A further improvement suggested is that the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal should be redesigned to carry 100-ton barges as far as the junction with the Shropshire Union Canal, also to be improved. This would link the navigation right through to the River Mersey.

These plans are bold in conception, and if they are translated into action, as we may hope they will be, should prove a boon both to our home and our overseas trade, for transport is as important as goods themselves.

OUR CRAFTSMEN 2000 YEARS AGO

A VALUABLE store of weapons and utensils used by our Celtic ancestors of the Iron Age between 200 B.C. and A.D. 50 has been presented to the National Museum of Wales by Mr Evan R. Hughes of Tregof, Caereigion. These interesting objects were found when a bog was drained near Holyhead. The Governors of the Museum say it is the most varied collection of Celtic remains ever unearthed in Wales.

The treasure consists of fragments of swords, spears, daggers, and iron tyres of chariots. Beside these fragments there is a chariot horn cap, a sickle, a bronze trumpet, part of a cauldron, and a wand of ash wood decorated with a bronze ribbon—probably used by druids. A grim reminder of the cruel wars of those days is a quantity of gang chains for captives.

The craftsmen of that far-off time were highly-skilled artists and the ornamental work on the weapons and other objects they fashioned is often very beautiful.

THINGS SEEN

A white squirrel sitting on a garden fence at Tunbridge Wells.

At Bradford in Yorkshire, a rainbow in the moonlight one evening early this month.

We Are Selling More Abroad

ENCOURAGING news of our prospects in export trade was given in the House of Commons the other day by Mr Dalton, President of the Board of Trade.

Although the goods other than munitions of war which we have sent out of the country have had to be greatly reduced in the interests of the war effort, nevertheless, in 1943, we exported £232,000,000 worth of such goods.

The chemical and the rayon (artificial silk) industries made very substantial exports and were, declared Mr Dalton, very promising. Exports in these industries in 1943 had increased, over pre-war shipments, 80 per cent as regards chemicals and 10 per cent as regards rayon.

The upward move in exports would be accelerated next year, though, of course, we could not go full speed ahead during the war.

Our export trade is vital to our future if we are to give our own people full employment and a good standard of living.

A HOUNSKULL COMES TO TOWN

THE nation has received a valuable and interesting addition to its museum treasures in an ancient helmet that was probably worn by a knight in the Hundred Years' War. The helmet is a 14th-century visored bascinet, and it will be on view to the public in the armouries of the Tower of London when they are reopened after the war.

This type of helmet is exceedingly rare today and fewer than 20 specimens are known to exist. It is of a peculiar shape with a protruding pointed snout in front of its egg-shaped headpiece. It has been called the "pig-faced" helmet.

In medieval times these helmets were nicknamed by soldiers "hounskulls," since they gave the wearer a dog-like appearance. Nevertheless their design had been carefully worked out by the armourers of those times to cause a sword blow aimed at the fighting man's head to glance off the curved surface of the helmet.

The present specimen has been acquired by the National Art-Collections Fund from Sir Edward Barry, of Ockwells Manor, Berkshire.

Bonds of Sympathy

NOTHING more glaringly illustrates the baseness of German character than the infamous treatment of Holland, where the Nazis have done their utmost destruction by wanton flooding to make the land permanently unproductive, if not uninhabitable.

British sympathy for the Dutch could scarcely be warmer, yet the two nations might have been more intimately related, might have been fellow subjects under one Crown. After the assassination in 1584 of their great leader, William the Silent, the Dutch offered their throne to Queen Elizabeth. She declined the honour, but sent a military expedition to their aid, against the tyrannous Spaniards—the expedition in which Sir Philip Sidney took part, and, like so many of his countrymen who followed in his wake at Arnhem 358 years later, laid down his life that Holland might be free.

LITTLE NEWS REELS

THE men who made the Mulberry Harbours for the Normandy landings are to make temporary houses. Their model will be called the Phoenix.

A new secret chemical compound is to be used in the war against locusts. It is called "666" and is not dangerous to animals.

MR FRANK BRAHAM, a Londoner of 74 who started painting two years ago, has had one of his pictures shown by the Royal Society of British Artists at the Suffolk Galleries.

A 1786 Kilmarnock edition of Poems by Robert Burns has been auctioned for £425.

Melbourne University has received a bequest of £105,000 for a new library.

Nigeria is to have 48,275 miles of new roads to link it with the Cape to Algiers highways.

The 50th award of the Royal Philharmonic Society's Gold Medal for services to music was made recently; it went to Sir Adrian Boult, chief conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

General Eisenhower has released 3000 American soldiers, all skilled building workers, to help in rebuilding London's bombed homes.

Newmarket is to have mountain ash, silver birch, cherry, and almond trees along its roadsides.

With an average time of three minutes three seconds the city of Leicester again heads the monthly list of 18 cities for brevity of trunk calls.

Russia and France have signed a new Treaty of Alliance.

Liberation News Reel

THE Eire Parliament has voted £100,000 for relief work in Italy.

Belgians are reading a sixpenny 32-page magazine called Envoy which has been produced to illustrate Britain's war effort.

Czech troops with the German army facing the Americans have mutinied against the Nazis. As a result most of the Czech soldiers have been withdrawn.

Albanian youths and girls who fought against the Germans as partisans will be entitled to vote at their country's next election.

Germany's main store of ball-bearings at Oslo has been destroyed in a fire started at the warehouse by Norwegian patriots. The stocks were worth £90,000.

Our soldiers in the Siegfried Line are now being served with tea from a mobile Y.M.C.A. canteen.

SUPPLIES from China flown over the Himalayas in October were four times as great as in any previous month.

During three years of war the US has destroyed 29,316 Axis planes for the loss of 13,491.

Youth News Reel

GUIDE June Fenwick of Kenya has been awarded the Gilt Cross for her great coolness and initiative when the bus in which she was travelling overturned.

Mrs G. Beeston, Captain of the 1st Machen (Monmouthshire) Company of Girl Guides, has received the Silver Cross, and her Patrol Second, Eileen George, the Gilt Cross, for their gallantry in helping to rescue two small children who had fallen into six feet of water in a manhole.

The Girl Guide fund to support teams of Guide Relief workers for Europe has reached over £40,735.

Robert Sierstedt, a 12-year-old

In the flooded streets of Paris recently men were fishing from boats level with the lamp-post tops.

The first registered air mail to arrive here from Southern Rhodesia contained a package bearing stamps to the value of £3 5s 4d. The package contained a book worth 3s.

A MILE-A-MINUTE carrier pigeon William of Orange, which served with the airborne troops at Arnhem and flew 260 miles to London in 265 minutes, has been sold for £135.

A further gift of £5000 has been made by Lord Nuffield to his £100,000 Fund for the healing and care of deformed and crippled children of South Africa.

A walnut dropped from the beak of a rook eight years ago has grown into a tree 15 feet high, which produced 50 nuts this year.

Another Atlantic flying record for big bombers was made a few days ago when three fully-loaded R.A.F. Liberators flew the 3150 miles from West to East in 10 hours 31 minutes.

A prisoner of war in Germany, Sergeant A. W. J. Souster, of Bletchley, Buckinghamshire, has passed three examinations sent to him by the Royal Horticultural Society.

The King and Queen have sent three-volume editions of Pepy's Diary as Christmas presents to the libraries of British prisoner-of-war camps in Germany.

BIRCH, in Essex, a village of 200 inhabitants, challenges any other village to beat its Red Cross Agricultural Fund total for last year of £1760.

Dragon men and Yellow Devils are German nicknames for the British 43rd division which has as its sign the yellow head of a wyvern or dragon, the traditional badge of the ancient kingdom of Wessex from whose counties most of the men come.

The Jewish Feast of Lights was celebrated on German soil for the first time since the Nazis came into power when chaplains held services for Allied Jewish soldiers.

Since the outbreak of this war the U.S.A. have produced 1,800,000 big and medium guns, 15 million machine-guns and rifles, 34 thousand million rounds of ammunition, 43 million bombs, 196 million uniforms, 98 million pairs of shoes, and 187,000 planes.

SUGAR from Brazil for the liberated parts of Europe is expected in Portugal shortly.

A powerful new British fleet has been formed for the Pacific.

Two drums lost by the Black Watch Regiment in 1940 have been found by American troops in one of the Metz forts.

American Boy Scout, has begun a one-boy waste-paper collection campaign in New York. His daily average has been 1000 to 1200 pounds of paper.

Acton Scouts have delivered nearly 600 Christmas appeals for the Acton Hospital.

There were 240 officers of the Boys Brigade at the recent Annual Meeting of the London Council, the biggest council gathering in London since the war began.

The Boy Scouts of Honley, near Huddersfield, have collected a great stack of logs for delivery before Christmas to the poor and aged people of their village.

BUTTONS AND CHEWING-GUM

WHERE would the Doughboy be without his chewing-gum, and where without his buttons?

The U.S. War Department has bought 2,500,000 vegetable ivory buttons from Ecuador, where their substance is prized from the ivory nut palm. The chewing-gum comes from the sapodilla tree in the form of chicha sap, and the U.S. manufacturer does the rest.

Another commodity in short supply now is beeswax. Here again South and Central America come to the fore with substitutes.

Brazil has the carnauba wax palm with wax on its leaves that goes into gramophone records, soap, and sound films; and Guatemala, Costa Rica, and El Salvador offer their jojoba bushes which afford a liquid substitute not as good as beeswax but something like it.

THIS KIND WORLD

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD Brenda Woolnough of Canterbury was critically ill with a rare complaint called coeliac disease. An essential part of the treatment of this disease is to eat bananas, but where were Brenda's parents to obtain bananas in these times? The R.A.F. came to the rescue, and a big bunch of bananas flown 3000 miles were brought to Brenda. They were the first she had ever tasted, and the R.A.F. will continue the supply.

FROM PEACE TO WAR

THE world having been told of Britain's war effort by the Government, individual British firms are now permitted to tell of their war service.

Now the veil of secrecy has been lifted, Londoners have been told that their public vehicles have not been maintained at the high standard of peacetime because the repair depots of London Transport have been engaged on the production of Halifax bombers. Firms will now be able to tell their pre-war customers why their normal production diminished or ceased, and they will be able to announce their production of planes, tanks, guns, or other wartime articles. Most of these announcements will tell of output to the end of last year, although some firms will be allowed to tell of production up to June this year. Production details of weapons still on the secret list will not, of course, be given.

LIFE-SAVING BLOOD

FOUR out of every five Servicemen wounded in this war are saved by blood transfusions. A member of the Army Blood Transfusion Service, Brigadier L. E. H. Whitby, gave this information recently. The wounded men in this war have an 80 to 90 per cent chance of survival. Mutilated men are being completely restored to efficiency; men with similar wounds in the last war would not have had a chance to live.

Thousands of lives have been saved by this important service, which the British Army had within three days of the declaration of war. It was the first army to have a blood transfusion service, and the German Army had not adopted the idea until last year. Brigadier Whitby pointed out that all the blood given by the public had been put to good use.

A New Setting For the Conqueror's Tower

MOST of us will agree with the statement by the Tower Hill Improvement Trust that the Tower of London is the finest historic monument in Europe.

The Trust have now proposed that the Tower of London should be bounded on the north by seven acres of gardens, part of which would be set aside for children. This space would include Tubby Clayton's Church of All Hallows, the Scaffold site, the memorial to the Merchant Seamen, and part of the famous London Wall.

The Trust have also suggested that a car park for 30 motor coaches should be laid out just

outside the entrance to the Tower, because they are sure that there will be more visitors than ever to this historic pile when the war is over.

This sort of planning gladdens our hearts. Of our ancient treasures the Tower of London is among the most precious. The White Tower dates from William the Conqueror, St John's Chapel in that Tower is one of the finest Norman chapels in England, and the whole building and its surroundings teem with history.

By the irony of fate much of this area has been cleared by Hitler's bombs, thus providing a

golden opportunity to give this bastion of antiquity a proper setting.

The Trust's plan has been presented to the Royal Fine Arts Commission, and sponsored, among others, by Sir Charles Bressey, the great road planner, it will be submitted to the City of London Corporation and the London County Council in the New Year.

We hope that land values and other considerations will not defeat this scheme for providing a very attractive setting to one of England's most treasured monuments.



For Their Liberators

Belgian boys and girls smile bravely as they give up their toys to be sent to the toyless children of Britain. Their sacrifice is gladly made to show their gratitude for being liberated after four long years of oppression.

RED CROSS AID TO RUSSIA

IN a recent speech Mrs Churchill said that her Aid to Russia Fund has reached £6,000,000, and that some 13,000 tons of medical supplies have been shipped to Russia. She added that not one convoy that sails on the northern route leaves without some Red Cross supplies.

THE AGROJEEP

THE Jeep, which has done so much for military transport during this war, is to be adapted for post-war use. With a different body design, greater carrying capacity, and less speed, it is to be used on the land, and in this new guise of farmer's friend will have the new name of Agrojeep.

YOUNG BELGIANS GIVE US TOYS

HEARING that there is a toy famine in Britain, the boys and girls of liberated Belgium have started a campaign for collecting toys to send to us. A poster has been exhibited in Belgium showing an outline map of Great Britain with toys showering on it, and underneath is the appeal: "Youth of Belgium. Offer your toys to the children of our liberators who are deprived of them because of the war."

Thus the sacrifices that British boys and girls have cheerfully made to help the war are recognised and an Allied nation shows us her gratitude.

DONALD DUCK'S PROMOTION

DR T. J. HONEYMAN, the well-known Glasgow Art Galleries director, is to give a Christmas lecture to young people under the auspices of the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow. The subject he has chosen is Donald Duck.

GOOD WORK!

DURING the period of the war 1600 miners at Blidworth Colliery, Nottinghamshire, have earned more than £2,000,000 in wages, and have produced two tons of coal per man per shift.

This is twice the average for the whole country, and the 17,000 tons weekly production is 20 per cent higher than the pre-war figures.

A Christmas Story From Down Under

SIR RICHARD SEDDON, one of the makers of New Zealand, always regarded it as a sacred custom to be home for Christmas; no matter where his duties took him.

One year during his early career as an engineer, as he was nearing the end of his homeward journey, he came to a flooded river, swelling every minute with torrents of rain.

He had no boat, he had no horse, and to swim the current was impossible. It seemed at first that union with his kindred at the Christmas table would be impossible.

But Richard Seddon was not a man to be thwarted, even in those desperate circumstances. Seeing a herd of cattle close by, he drove them into the river, and, selecting the most docile

looking cow, followed her into the flood, clung to her tail, and made her ferry him over the racing river.

Sir Richard risked his life, but he did get home, and though drenched and bedraggled and exhausted, he arrived in time to gladden the hearts of all the members of his family gathered together round the Christmas dinner table.

THE PIG-SQUEAL ON THE RADIO

WHETHER Britain should have commercial broadcasting as at present practised in America is a much-argued subject. Now America's commercial broadcasting system is itself being threatened by the first serious attack since broadcasting began.

Behind this scheme is a group of influential Americans who plan to give entertainment entirely without advertising matter. Known as Subscription Radio Incorporated, the new concern has been registered with the Federal Communication Commission in Washington. It is to supply a non-stop music programme relayed to clubs, restaurants, factories, and even shops.

The wavelengths on which this musical programme is to operate will have a continual pig-squeal which will only be eliminated by plugging-in to a radio set a special device. The cost of this device will be threepence daily, and without it none will be able to hear the programmes.

HOUSES FROM AMERICA

TO replace some of Britain's wrecked homes, America is planning to manufacture thousands of prefabricated aluminium houses in her disused aircraft factories. These buildings are to contain many a useful gadget and all the latest household inventions, including an electric cooker. It has been estimated that about £12,500,000 worth of housing is to be lend-leased to Britain.

WHAT DOES OUTWITH MEAN?

IN the House of Commons recently Mr. Shinwell used the word "outwith" and Mr. Churchill thanked him for introducing him to a new word. The Prime Minister was right in presuming that this word means "outside the scope of."

The word is today unknown in England, and the Oxford English Dictionary describes it as a rare word, the only examples of its use in England being in 16th-century writings. In Scotland, however, the word is still often used and Scottish MPs were surprised that Mr. Churchill had never heard of it.

A PLEA FOR BETTER CATTLE

WE must have better as well as more herds of cattle after the war. So said Mr. Hudson, our Minister of Agriculture, when addressing the Council of Agriculture for England the other day. "Seek quantity through quality," Mr. Hudson urged. As in human life, good parentage in the cattle world means good offspring and better and more milk.

Mr. Hudson also spoke of the need for encouraging young people of all sorts and conditions to take up farming, rather than relying only on farmers' sons and daughters to provide the next generation of farmers. The Government has plans for fostering this by means of farm institutes, and it is to be hoped that young England will take full advantage of the scheme when the time comes.

As we have so often said before, no home industry is more important or vital than agriculture.

December 23, 1944

The Child



Tripping Lightly Downstairs

Comet, the Chessington elephant, is quite used to going up and downstairs. He comes down these stairs at a Kingston stores every day on his way to the circus where he performs. Perhaps the attendant has to see he does not slide down the banisters.

THE QUEEN THANKS OUR WOMEN

THE Queen spoke for the whole nation when she said recently to representatives of women Civil Defence workers: "Thank you for a difficult job well done."

The Queen was speaking to a big meeting of women of the N.F.S., police, control staffs, ambulance and First Aid services, women wardens, fireguards, and women from the rest centres and the W.V.S. who had gathered in the council chamber of the County Hall, Westminster. Princess Elizabeth was there and sat by her mother's side on the royal dais. They were accompanied by Mr Morrison, Home Secretary, and Mr Willink, Minister of Health. It was a great occasion, held to mark the nation's gratitude to the women who have served our great Cause with such heroic self-sacrifice.

A Fine Tea Service

THE people of Ceylon, anxious to show their appreciation of what the troops have done for them during the war, have presented seven new tea cars to the Services. The Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton, in accepting the gift, said that it would be regarded as a token of goodwill and of interest in the welfare of the Forces. He hoped that such a gift would strengthen the bonds of friendship between the Forces and the civil population.

Four of the tea cars were from the tea industry, which had

In her inspiring speech the Queen said all the things everyone of us has wanted to say to our women who have worked so splendidly on the home front. "The war could not have been won without their help," said the Queen, and it is a fact we should always remember. Heartily the nation will endorse Her Majesty's statement that "You women have inscribed your names indelibly on the national roll of honour."

The Queen's praise was particularly directed to those women who have undertaken war work while still looking after their families. "The way you have done it while often carrying on in your own homes is beyond praise."

Every citizen, young or old, will endorse the Queen's sentiments.

already presented four, and the others were from the people of Ceylon. In addition the tea industry presented nearly half a million pounds of tea for use in Service canteens, messes, and hospital ships, and also distributed free to Service personnel stationed in Ceylon about four and a half million cups of tea.

Ceylon has the largest export trade of tea in the Colonial Empire, and her tea is renowned for its high quality. No gift could have expressed more suitably the appreciation of an industrious and loyal people.

Victory at Sea

LONDON has a thousand thrills for every British lad lucky enough to be near the Dorland Hall, in Regent Street, between now and December 30. They are to be had in the Victory at Sea Exhibition, sponsored by the News Chronicle in aid of the Navy League Sea Cadet Fund.

A wonderful collection of photographs stirring illustrations of the hazards and adventures of the war at sea; and great models show the Battle of Matapan and the famous actions against the Graf Spee, the Bismarck, and the Scharnhorst, in which the Senior Service and the junior Fleet Air Arm won such glory.

Perhaps the most popular exhibit is a full-size copy of the bridge of a destroyer, for there can be no greater thrill for any boy of this seafaring nation than to stand here fancying himself—clad bravely in sou'-wester and ever with an eye on the compasses—the man in charge of an escort vessel of a mighty convoy laden with the munitions of war. But we must away from the bridge, for there is much to see.

Giant Model

Stretching for 60 feet down the hall is a full-scale model of a 16-inch gun, and at the side of this huge gun are three different types of periscopes—one showing a view of a convoy as seen by a submarine commander, and the other two showing a U-boat surfacing and then sinking, with its crew swimming around in the water.

On a platform at the back of the hall is a 12-pounder gun, fitted with an air rifle which enables visitors to shoot at a moving target with lead pellets in the same way as sailors do when training.

Another attraction is the Panoramic Gunnery Trainer, which is the latest anti-aircraft training device. Shaped like a gun, it contains a screen on which appears an enemy plane at which the operator shoots. During the firing, battle noises are heard in the earphones and an electrical device registers the numbers of shots fired and the number of hits. There are many fine model ships, including one of the aircraft carrier Indomitable; and near this is a large model of the Fleet Air Arm action at Taranto.

One section of the exhibition is devoted to D Day, and contains two model layouts, one showing the Normandy beach heads, and the other a Mulberry harbour. There are also models of the many kinds of landing-craft.

The balcony is devoted to the work of the Fleet Air Arm, the W.R.N.S., the Merchant Navy, and, not least, the Sea Cadets.

No LOOFAHS

NOBODY just now sees a loofah, that scrubbing accessory once so welcome in our bathtubs. The war has shut off the supply from the East, so that it is scarcer even than the common sponges that have become so expensive.

The loofah comes not from the sea but from the sponge plant, where it will grow to as much as 26 inches; and is sometimes called the dishcloth gourd. We have Field-Marshal Montgomery's word for it that one bath a week will serve a soldier's needs, but the immersion would be more satisfactory if accompanied by our old acquaintance, the "dishcloth" loofah.

EDITOR'S TABLE

Heroes On Parade

SO the Men of Arnhem have been to town. A few hundred survivors of the gallant First Airborne Division have paraded at Buckingham Palace. There they were inspected by the King and more than 60 of them received decorations for gallantry, including the V.C.

It was just a workaday crowd which warmly greeted the heroes on their line of march, for London had not been forewarned of their coming. But, after all, the Men of Arnhem would prefer it that way, for the true hero abhors fuss.

THE RIGHTS OF MAN

SWITCHING on my wireless the other night, writes a C.N. correspondent, I heard an unknown speaker say something very wise. "When we talk about The Rights of Man, let us think instead of The Rights of the Other Man. If we all did that many of the world's problems would be solved."

The C.N., in its turn, gladly helps this broadcast on its way.

Learning the Bagpipes

PROFESSOR IAN MACDONALD-MURRAY, Principal of the Scottish School of Piping and Dancing, said recently that a learner of the bagpipes has to practise for five years before he reaches the stage where he can impress his friends.

But has he any friends left by that time, asks the mere Englishman.

JUST AN IDEA

The most perfect man is he who is most useful to others.

CARRY ON

A RAINBOW BRIGHT

A FRAGMENT of a rainbow bright
Through the moist air I see,
All dark and damp on yonder height,
All clear and gay to me.

An hour ago the storm was here,
The gleam was far behind.
So will our joys and griefs appear
When earth has ceased to bind.

Grief will be joy, if on its edge
Fall soft that holiest ray;
Joy will be grief, if no faint pledge
Be that of heavenly day.

John Keble

Above and Within

TWO things there are which fill the soul with admiration ever renewed and ever-growing each time we turn and apply our minds to them: the starry sky above us and the moral law within us. Kant

SUNDAY SCHOOL

FROM February 4 next all children under 16 will be admitted to Sunday cinema shows in the County Council area of Surrey.

This was decided by the Surrey Public Control and Licensing Committee after hearing deputations from cinema exhibitors and the Free Churches.

There is no doubt that the cinema has proved a strong counter-attraction to the Sunday School; and there are few who will disagree with the statement of Dr S. W. Hughes, Secretary of the Free Church Federal Council, that Sunday schools could be regarded as "one of the most cultural and formative institutions in the land."

Teachers From

WE welcome the news that women are to be released even from important war work to train for the teaching profession.

Women under 35 can now apply to be released from their war work in order to train to become teachers. They need not necessarily possess the school certificate, for each applicant will

Under the F

CLIMBING plants have become unpopular. They may climb back into favour.

PROFITEERS ought to be brought to heel, says a writer. What is wrong with the other end of the boot?

A SOLDIER in Belgium paid five shillings for a sandwich. Cut price.

PEOPLE are asked not to travel during Christmas. This, however, does not apply to Santa Claus.

PETER P.



If Christ are in

An American on a

SHORT, however, as it is, of its ancient and festive honours, Christmas is still a period of delightful excitement in England. It is gratifying to see that home feeling completely aroused which holds so powerful a place in every English bosom. The preparation: making on every side for the social board that is again to unite friends and kindred; the presents of good cheer passing and repassing, those tokens of regard, and quickeners of kind feelings; the evergreens distributed about houses and churches, emblems of peace and gladness; all these have the most pleasing

WHAT C

ANGELS and archangels May have gathered there, Cherubim and seraphim Thronged the air. But only His mother In her maiden bliss Worshipped the Beloved With a kiss.

IL OR KINEMA?

Social workers tell us that the lack of religious background in the lives of young offenders is very noticeable; and for a larger proportion of our boys and girls than is generally recognised the Sunday School has been the chief means of acquiring that background. So that anything which lessens the influence of the Sunday School is to be deplored.

Perhaps all Sunday Schools are not the bright, cheerful places they should be. And here we would suggest that they could take a lesson from the cinema. The screen with its vast possibilities for education as well as for entertainment should be an invaluable aid to the magnificent work of the Sunday School.

the Factories

go before a board of experts, who will decide if she is likely to become a good teacher.

The first 500 students for the teaching profession will begin their training in the New Year, and every month after that another 500 girls will leave the war factories to go to training colleges and universities.

Dangers of Science

THE writing on the wall is plain for all to read, said Sir Henry Dale, President of the Royal Society the other day after describing the Nazi V-weapons as a monstrous perversion of science.

Sir Henry warned his audience that if, when the war is over, the world allows science to be exploited by a nation grasping for conquest, annihilation at an ever-lengthening range will result.

This, especially from so distinguished a scientist, is a warning indeed. Science can and should be a boon and a blessing to men. Its possibilities can bring health, comfort, prosperity, and serve many another noble purpose. But it must be harnessed drastically, otherwise it will take the world down the slippery slope of disaster. The Charter of the United Nations which was planned at Dumbarton Oaks will surely provide safeguards against this appalling menace.

The world must be on the watch. We repeat: the writing on the wall is plain for all to read.

Telling the Free World

THE tale of Britain's mammoth war effort, told in the Government's White Paper, is to be the subject of a 50-minute film, for dispatch to every free country of the world.

There is every reason why the story of Britain at war should be shown on the screens of the free world. To hide our light under a bushel would be unfair to our own people who toiled, sweated, and endured; moreover, it would leave other countries to assume, if they chose to do so, that we had not gone all out to achieve victory.

This is propaganda of the right sort.

REMEMBRANCE

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.
Shelley

The Value of Manners

MANNERS are the shadows of virtues; the momentary display of those qualities which our fellow-creatures love and respect. If we strive to become, then, what we strive to appear, manners may often be rendered useful guides to the performance of our duties. *Sydney Smith*

Softening the Heart

TEARS are the softening showers which cause the seed of heaven to spring up in the human heart. *Sir Walter Scott*

An Old Town Settles Down

THE invasion of a quaint little Cornish town is over, and the old place is settling down again.

A dreamy old town it is where nothing much ever happened until the great invasion by "foreigners," as all who live beyond the Tamar and "don't belong to we" are called.

They came—four or five hundred women and children—from bombed cities to share the people's homes, to shop in their shops, to stand in their queues, and to worship side by side in the grey-walled Church and the Methodist Chapel down the lane.

Then the Americans came with their trucks, jeeps, and bulldozers. They, too, were welcomed into many homes. They invaded the market-place, the cinema, the streets, and the shops. In the long evenings they played baseball on the green and bathed in the tiny river. They fell in love with the pocket-handkerchief-like fields, the narrow winding country lanes, the high hedges agleam with wild flowers, and the blue Cornish hills beyond. They always had a friendly smile for the children, they were always generous and kind.

So the old town was almost surrendered to the invaders. Never had so many rested beneath its ancient roofs. Never had so many strange tongues been heard. And all the time the little old town was on its best behaviour, and felt all the better for the invasion.

Gradually, the evacuees drifted back. The Americans pulled out. The old town is strangely quiet. Now it prepares for another invasion—the homecoming of its own 300 exiled sons and daughters who went away to follow the Flag.

CREATORS OF GOODWILL

Boys and girls in the USA are showing great enthusiasm for Red Cross work and hundreds of thousands of them belong to the Junior branch—the counterpart of the one in Britain. They have been working hard this autumn preparing to make Christmas as bright a time as possible for their own men on active service. They have made decorations for military hospitals and packed thousands of Christmas stockings for the soldiers with such small gifts as pencils, notebooks, puzzles, gum, toilet articles, all taken from the big store of such things these industrious young people of America have accumulated.

Near to their hearts as this task is, they have concentrated too on the even more urgent work of sending help to the children in the war-torn lands. They have prepared and sent overseas thousands of small gift boxes containing toys, dolls, and games to children who for years have known little of the delights of Christmas.

Perhaps their most important job, however, will be sending help to the thousands of children in Europe made homeless by the war. The American National Children's Fund is made up of contributions from nearly 18 million members throughout the United States; it is being held in readiness to be used for the children of the stricken nations when they are liberated.

THE COURAGEOUS EXAMPLE OF ALFRED SADD

ON Betio Island in the Gilberts, far away in the Pacific, a memorial has been set up in honour of the Revd Alfred Sadd and 21 other British subjects murdered there by the Japanese.

Alfred Sadd, of the London Missionary Society, belongs to that immortal company of Christians who through the centuries have gone forth to meet a barbarous death, serene and unafraid. He was a true Warrior of the Lord, armed only with his Faith; and when the end came, stark and brutal, he was not found wanting. This is his story from the time of the Japanese invasion of Beru in the Gilbert Islands, in 1942.

When the Japanese landed, Alfred Sadd quickly appeared on the scene. As he came forward they spread a Union Jack on the ground, but he saluted and walked round it. Later, when he advanced towards the Commander they again spread a Union Jack on the ground, and, as a translation from a Gilbertese pastor's letter tells: "Mr Sadd, on reaching the flag, stooped down, took up the flag in his hands, gathered it in his arms and kissed it, and carried it and presented it to the officer who was sitting beside the Commander. The Japs marvelled at him and stared at him as he stood before the Commander. Perhaps they were amazed that he did not walk upon the Union Jack."

Evidently the Japanese were rather surprised that Sadd could take their presence with such ease and comparative gaiety. He had a splendid gift of fun and a boyish refusal to take life too seriously, even when it sometimes appeared to be more than serious. After a while the Japanese decided to imprison all white men, together with Alfred Sadd, on the islet of Betio in the Tarawa atoll. On Betio the 22 men were put to forced labour for the Japanese. Some of the men were elderly, but although Alfred Sadd, at 32, was one of the youngest he became the natural leader of the party.

Reports now coming from Gilbertese people at Tarawa speak of Alfred Sadd's courage, his cheerfulness, and his great sense of humour in facing all the hard work to which the Japanese submitted the party. He taught his comrades songs and hymns, and always had a joke while they were at their heavy work. A

native pastor says of him: "He went without fear, he was not at all troubled or heavy-hearted. Two soldiers were very angry because Mr Sadd walked very quickly. They shouted at him with angry voices, but he went on the same until people told him that the Japanese were angry because he was going so fast—and then he went more slowly."

One day in October, 1942, it seems that an Allied warship appeared off Tarawa, and it may be that one of the party made some attempt to signal to it. However that may be, next morning the Japanese authorities decided that all the Europeans should be killed. A native report says: "They were very heavy-hearted, but Mr Sadd cheered them up before their death. They stood in a line, Mr Sadd in the middle, and presently he went out and stood in front of them and spoke words of cheer to them. When he had finished he went back and stood a little in front of them so that he would be the first to die. Then came a Japanese and struck him with his sword, and all the Europeans clapped their hands and were happy and unafraid when they saw the courage of Mr Sadd."

The end came swiftly, and as the inscription on the monument tells, "Standing unarmed to their posts they matched brutality with gallantry and met death with fortitude."

A Census From the Air

EVEN before the war surveys by planes for mapping unmapped areas were no new thing. But when peace comes the U.S. Census Bureau is preparing to make them in what Americans call a big way.

Next year aerial photographs will make a Farm Census. Out of 6,000,000 farms some 360,000 are to be photographed from the air to show the crops, the fields, and the farm buildings. Over the corn, wheat, and cotton areas the survey will be intensified so as to locate all farms, and reveal their plantings and the possibilities of their surroundings.

Editor's Table

EVERY family should get some nuts at Christmas. Those that don't must crack jokes.

PEOPLE should not make sweeping statements. Unless they are trying to sell vacuum cleaners.

A WRITER says he does not like the modern way of ignoring punctuation. Thinks a stop should be put to it.

FOREIGN currency fills the average Englishman with alarm. And his pockets with paper.

an English Christmas

effect in producing fond associations, and kindling benevolent sympathies. Even the sound of the waits, rude as may be their minstrelsy, breaks upon the mid-watches of a winter night with the effect of perfect harmony. As I have been awakened by them in that still and solemn hour; "when deep sleep falleth upon man," I have listened with a hushed delight, and, connecting them with the sacred and joyous occasion, have almost fancied them into another celestial choir, announcing peace and goodwill to mankind.

Washington Irving

AN I GIVE?

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man
I would do my part.
Yet what I can I give Him?
Give my heart. *Christina Rossetti*



THIS ENGLAND

Strand-on-the-Green by the River Thames, between Chiswick and Kew

Spice For Our Delight

SUGAR and spice and all things nice—now is the great hour for them. As we near this festive season puddings are being stirred, cakes are being planned, and anticipating mouths are watering, thanks to an indulgent Ministry of Food.

So let us give thanks to the Ministry which, responsible for feeding a nation in the throes of war, have remembered that man does not live by bread alone and have afforded us "a variety of spice." Sage from Cyprus, thyme from Spain, marjoram from Kenya—they have ordered it all for our delight.

These herbs, of course, are little luxuries for palates jaded by the monotony of wartime fare and represent but small expenditure of ship-space or money. Spices used to be the chief items of cargo for which men sacrificed their ease and ventured their lives and fortunes. For spices some of the most tremendous pioneering voyages of all time were made, with discoveries of incalculable consequence to mankind. The spices—cloves, ginger, nutmeg, mace, and pepper—were coveted, at any cost, not only to add zest to poor fare but to mask the evil flavour of meat that had lain, imperfectly preserved, for many months in the salt-tubs.

In the overland days before the discovery of the sea route to the East men travelled by caravan over great deserts and faced the direst perils to bring their spices to market. Such was the traffic of the spice-merchants of whom we read in the Old Testament. Profits were enormous. When the sea-way was found the spices brought from India by Vasco da Gama yielded returns of six thousand per cent. The spices that came home with the ships that survived Magellan's round-the-world expedition paid for all

the losses and all the costs of the entire enterprise and left a profit amounting to what would be some £2000 today.

Great were the risks, but great the financial reward, of the first 86 ships in this trade sent out by the East India Company in the time of Shakespeare. Only 36 returned with spices, the others having been captured or otherwise lost; yet the profits far outweighed the losses. Pepper and spices were cargo richer far than all the apes and peacocks, the panther skins, and the human slaves that formed a staple of the trade between Abyssinia, Egypt, and the Phoenicians.

Even today, however, although the quest is less hazardous, there lingers yet a subtle flavour of romance in the thought of spice-laden argosies homeward bound—with marjoram from Kenya, or cloves from Zanzibar.

PUNCTURE-PROOF

A CYCLE firm in Liverpool is making bicycle wheels that pump up their own tyres and keep punctured tyres hard. An air-pump is built into the hub, and as the wheel turns air is pumped through what resembles an extra spoke.

This pump will automatically keep a tyre inflated against any puncture which would not exhaust it in less than three minutes. War controls do not yet allow this invention to be made commercially, otherwise it could be bought for about 25 shillings.

SAFEGUARDING WAGES

STANDARD rates of wages throughout the country are the aim of a new Government measure called the Wages Councils Bill. This Bill will regulate wages throughout the whole of industry and will affect fifteen and a half million workers.

In the industries where wages are now regulated by trade boards, and in the larger range of industries and services in which wages councils are to be formed, the minimum wages and conditions will be enforced.

Each wages council will consist of an equal number of persons representing employers and workers, together with three independent persons chosen by the Minister of Labour. These councils will be concerned not only with the fixing of wages, but with holidays and payment for holidays.

Here, indeed, is a Charter of great moment. Wages will not be left to the whim of an employer, with the possibility of sweated labour for a mere pittance. But, in return for it, all workers must give their due in good work and service. Suitable payment for labour, whether it be in sinew or brains, or both, is obvious justice. But the labourer must be worthy of his hire.

This Bill gives yet another indication of the Government's intention to make a better world.

Tommy's Own Christmas Cards

FRIENDS and relatives of our Servicemen in India are receiving airgraph Christmas cards designed by the men themselves. A competition has been held in India by Welfare officers and the Army and R.A.F. postal authorities, and the winning designs selected. Most of these are humorous. One is based on the famous Indian "rope trick." It shows a half-naked fakir causing a coil of rope to ascend by itself and spell out the words, Just a Line. Another depicts a very hot, perspiring airman clad in shorts and shirt listening rather enviously to a wireless set playing "And the Snow Lay Round About."

Scottish Migration

THE scheme for developing the Highlands, mentioned in a recent C.N., lends interest to some facts on Scottish population and migration given by the Scottish Registrar General, Mr J. G. Kyd, in a lecture to the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow.

Between 1881 and 1931 the net loss of population in Scotland due to migration was about 1,200,000, a figure in excess of the population of Glasgow. The population is at present huddled in a small part of the country, four-fifths occupying a little over a quarter of the available area.

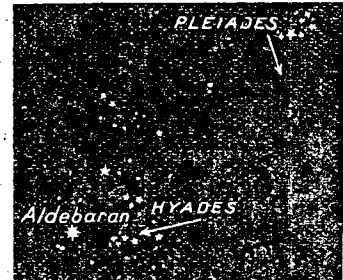
The strain of migration, according to Mr Kyd had been most severe in the Highlands, where in these fifty years there had been a loss of about half a million out of a total of barely a million. He added that the national economy should therefore be planned to allow Highlanders to find employment in their native glens.

Two Glorious Clusters of Suns

IN our vast Universe of over a thousand million suns, writes the C.N. Astronomer, there exists a definite arrangement, and they are not spread, as might appear, haphazard through space as if they came into position by accident.

We fancifully arrange them into Constellations, but the stars have no part in this; the artificial grouping is to make easier the identification of each star. Actually, these myriads of suns are arranged in streams, groups, and clusters in conformity with a very definite plan.

The clusters are of particular interest because they are usually so obvious. Two of these, the Pleiades and Hyades, being among the nearest and therefore



the most impressive to the eye, can be seen high in the south-east sky now in the evening, and may be readily recognised from our star-map. Such congregations of suns are among the most marvellous and magnificent of the decorations of our glorious Universe, but the Pleiades and the much nearer Hyades belong to two totally different types. Pleiades cluster is much the vaster, but being at an average distance of about 326 light-years, it appears to cover a much smaller area of the sky than the Hyades cluster, which averages about 136 light-years' distance.

Let us consider the Pleiades in relation to ourselves and in relation to the Universe. The "sweet influences of Pleiades," noted thousands of years ago and referred to in Job 38, verse 31, was produced only by the "seven stars" as recorded in Amos, chapter 5, verse 8. Though they marvelled, mankind thought no more than these existed until the advent of Galileo's telescope, though observers with very sharp eyes and under ideal conditions had at times claimed to have seen as many as ten. Actually, only six can now be clearly discerned; the seventh one of the

ancients appears to have faded many centuries ago and has been known as the "lost Pleiad."

Upwards of thirty stars are revealed by opera-glasses, more than fifty by field-glasses, telescopes raise the number into hundreds according to their powers, while photography through the most powerful telescopes shows the number perceptible to be over two thousand. A very large number of these are obviously members of the cluster. The six usually visible to the naked eye are Alcyone, the brightest, Merope, Electra, Maia, Taygeta, and Atlas. But the lost Pleiad, Pleione, with Celaeno and the two composing Asterope are all "giant" suns, generally enveloped in radiant helium. Alcyone alone radiates about 400 times more light than our Sun, and from a surface very much hotter.

Why such vast congregations and numbers of suns should be thus assembled together is one of the most engaging problems of our Universe. Moreover, the suns are all correlated to each other in the clusters and the whole company are speeding together in a definite direction as indicated by arrows on the map.

The Hyades cluster (of which Aldebaran is not a member) is composed of only about 80 suns, all of which appear to be speeding away from us towards a certain point. The diameter of the whole cluster is upwards of 35 light-years, so some members must be much nearer to us than others. The Pleiades cluster has a much larger diameter, and the suns, of an earlier type, are much more densely assembled together.

While vast streams of suns speed, like our own Sun, through great curving paths that they have to follow and will never return to again, others, from some particular cause, are gathered as it were into colossal celestial vortices in large numbers, to swirl in the far greater whirlpool of suns and worlds which we know as our Universe. G. F. M.

THE FUTURE OF DOMESTIC SERVICE

MANY housewives are wondering whether after the war they will be able to obtain the services of women helpers in their homes. One thing is certain, the conditions of domestic service in the future will be very different from those of bygone times. The day of the underpaid household drudge is gone for ever. On the other hand, employers are entitled to receive efficient service for the wages they pay. With this in view two schemes have been worked out to train girls.

The first scheme is an official one produced by the Ministry of Labour on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Institutional Domestic Employment. Under this scheme girls of 16 and upwards are already being trained for domestic service, and they are

being paid during their period of training a minimum of 20 shillings a week for girls of 16 and 17, rising to 50 shillings a week for those of 21 and over. After their training they will work in hospitals and institutions.

The second scheme has been worked out by the British Legion, which is forming a Home Service Corps from ex-Servicewomen. Girls trained under this scheme will go from a central headquarters to work by the day or week for employers who will have to sign an agreement as to the hours, wages, and conditions of employment. These girls will wear a blue Legion uniform.

By such progressive schemes as these the domestic worker of the future will be on the same footing as any other kind of worker—just as they should be.

BEDTIME CORNER

Tony's Wonderful Christmas

TONY was not very pleased to hear that his cousin Joan had been invited to spend Christmas with them.

It would have been dull enough at any time, he thought, to have to play with a girl; it was most unfortunate that she should choose the very day, and even the very time, to arrive when he was expecting a wonderful Christmas present—a much-longed-for pony.

But his mother had arranged for him to go with her to meet Joan, so of course he went.

Directly they got home he rushed round to the stable at the bottom of the garden.

There was the prettiest little pony he had ever seen. It was a Shetland, not much bigger than a dog.

"Are you going to try her?" asked Rogers, the gardener.

"I mustn't," said Tony, "till Daddy comes home. This afternoon I'm to have my first riding lesson."

But Tony didn't have his lesson that day—or the next, for his Daddy came home with a bad cold and went to bed.

To cheer him up his mother asked him to help her to put up the holly.

"I wonder where Joan is?" she said. "Go and fetch her, Tony."



But Joan could not be found.

"Look!" cried Tony suddenly, pointing down the lane. "That looks like her, leading my pony! It can't be!"

But it was. "You left the stable gate open," she called out, "and the naughty little thing got out. So I went after her!"

"Weren't you afraid?" asked Tony.

"Oh, no," said Joan. "I've got a pony too."

That night Joan had a posy of the sweetest flowers from the greenhouse—from Tony.

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK

ADMIRERS of Greece and all that she stands for in civilisation have been deeply troubled by the civil strife which has broken out in that country, and made our intervention necessary.

The Greeks, the oldest civilised nation in Europe, have, unhappily, inherited a tradition of political strife. The whole history of the Greek people has been marked by their consistent failure to agree among themselves as to how they should be governed.

Nathaniel Lee's line, When Greeks joined Greeks then was the tug of war, has become a familiar quotation.

In the first Great War Greece produced a great Liberal leader in Venizelos, a Cretan. He had already forced autocratic King Constantine to call a national assembly and had formed a league of the Balkan States against Turkey. When the war of 1914 broke out he called on his countrymen to rally behind the Allied Cause and against the aggression of Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany. Many Greeks followed him, but many were unsympathetic. Venizelos set up a Provisional Government of National Defence in September 1916, and in June 1917 King Constantine, who favoured Germany, was dethroned. After that the Government of Venizelos declared war on Germany, but even then a large number of Greeks were opposed to him. About half of the officers of the Greek army resigned. After that war the same story of strife and disagreement went on, the nation

being, among other matters, fundamentally divided on the question of whether they should have a king or be a republic. Before this war Greece was ruled by a semi-dictator, General Metaxas.

Lord Haw-Haw has stated recently, with regard to the present disturbances in Greece, that the Germans "had no trouble with the Greeks when they were in occupation." But he is wrong, for, as all the world knows, the Greek patriots were always a serious menace to them.

Now that the Greek nation is freed not only from their own pre-war dictator but from German domination, it is not really surprising that their old tradition of violent political quarrels among themselves should reassert itself. But we earnestly trust that the Greeks will recall that their chief city is named after Athene, their ancient Goddess of Wisdom.

The Latest German Planes

THE secrets about the two new German super planes have recently been revealed. These planes which have been in action over the Western Front lately, have only a limited range.

One of them, the rocket propelled Me 163 B, or "Flying Firework" as it is known in the R.A.F., can do 500 to 600 m.p.h.; it has a very high rate of climb; has no tailplane; and is used as an interceptor fighter.

The other plane is the Me 262 A, a jet propelled machine which can do 450 to 500 m.p.h. This plane has four 30-m.m. guns in the nose, and is used mainly as a fighter bomber.

Lord Samuel Will Lead

LORD CREWE has resigned his position as leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords because of his advancing years. The Liberal peers have unanimously elected Lord Samuel as his successor.

Lord Crewe is a fine old statesman who has served his country well in important Government posts during his long life.

Lord Samuel, too, has had a long career of service to the State. He has become celebrated chiefly during his active life for the broad humanity of his outlook on the affairs of his fellow men and of his efforts to help them. He has striven tirelessly to build up a better understanding between men and nations.

It was for this Cause that he worked in Palestine where, during the five years he was High Commissioner, he tried to reconcile the Jews and Arabs. Another well-known example of his work to try to solve difficult human problems was his Chairmanship of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry in 1925.

Besides his political duties Viscount Samuel, like the famous Earl Balfour, has found time to devote to the study of philosophy. The books he has written, such as *Philosophy and the Ordinary Man*, *The Tree of Good and Evil*, *Practical Ethics*, are the fruits of an inquiring mind and a wide human sympathy.

HE MADE HIS OWN LEG

WHEN he was repatriated to England, Private Collins walked out of the prison camp on a wooden leg that he had made himself.

He obtained leather from the American Red Cross, fibre and plastics from the Germans, steel from the British Red Cross, and the foot from a discarded wooden leg he had found at the camp.

Mr Churchill Makes a Plea

MR CHURCHILL was educated at Harrow School, and right proud he is of it, as well he might be. Six former Prime Ministers, great soldiers like Field-Marshal Gort and Field-Marshal Alexander, and many other distinguished men of yesterday and today were educated there too.

The other day Mr Churchill talked to the boys of his old school and pleaded for the setting up of a fund out of which old Harrovians, who are not well-off can be assisted to send their sons to Harrow. He urged that the intake of pupils should be broadened to permit youths in every class of the nation to win scholarships for Harrow.

Since the Prime Minister made

MALTA and the heroism of its defenders have given us some of the most thrilling stories of the war. We may now read with pride the official account of the magnificent part played by the R.A.F. in the defence of Britain's island base in the Mediterranean.

This prolonged air battle was, perhaps, second only in importance for the Allied cause to the Battle of Britain. For Malta, 17 miles by eight, lies athwart the sea route by which General Rommel in North Africa was getting his supplies from Italy, and for over two years the enemy sought desperately to wipe out the defences of this little bastion.

The dramatic story of this air battle, splendidly told and lavishly illustrated in *The Air Battle of Malta* (Stationery Office, 1s), begins with the time in June, 1940, when Malta had only three biplane Gladiator fighters, nicknamed Faith, Hope, and Charity, and takes us up to the glorious days in October, 1942, when Spitfires went out to sea and smashed up the last enemy air attack on the island, shooting down 132 hostile planes before they could reach her. It is indeed a story of faith, hope, and indomitable courage.

In June, 1940, there were those who thought it was hardly worth while getting the Gladiators out of the packing-cases in which they were stored. Yet they went up and fought overwhelming numbers of Italian fighters. With the later addition of a few Hurricanes during succeeding months they exploded Mussolini's boast that he would capture Malta within a few hours.

In January, 1941, the Germans arrived, intending to finish what they doubtless thought their allies should have done in 1940. For five months they blitzed Malta and inflicted widespread damage, but they, too, failed. Wellingtons and Swordfish aircraft, as well as submarines and destroyers of the Royal Navy from Malta continued to sink Rommel's supply ships.

his plea the school has opened a £300,000 War Memorial Fund which, in his words, will be concentrated as far as possible on the life, strength, and resources of the school.

Harrow is a fine school. It gives boys a first-class education, and its traditions help to mould and toughen character. But it should not be available only for the privileged few whose parents are well-to-do. The school is too good to be missed by promising sons of humble parents, who would gain enormously by the Harrow education and training.

There are abundant signs that our great Public Schools will become, in the future, more and more open to clever boys of all classes. This is as it should be.

MORE DEGREES FOR TECHNICAL MEN

LOCAL education authorities of London and the Home Counties are recommending that degree qualifications should be made available for students in technological subjects. They hope that the University of London will recognise this proposal and confer appropriate degrees. They urge, too, that technical institutes should be so equipped as to command respect by world standards.

Here is enlightened progress, indeed. It should not be only for

those who pursue the sciences, engineering, medicine, the law, or the arts to obtain degrees at the University of London. It is equally important that our clever craftsmen in laboratories and workshops should be able to obtain a recognised hallmark of qualification which will tell the world that they are experts.

If we are to succeed in the post-war world, a combination of brain and hand cleverness, properly developed and properly recognised, is vitally important.

GEORGE CROSS ISLAND

Then for some months the Germans, busy in Russia, left alone the island they so hated. But in January, 1942, with increased venom, they returned, determined this time to make a job of it. Rommel had been instructed to capture Cairo, and it was essential for him to receive supplies for this purpose. For another four months the little island's sirens wailed continuously, her soft but resilient rock trembled, and her beautiful buildings crashed in clouds of smoke and dust.

It was during this period that an artillery officer jokingly suggested that the B.B.C.'s Malta news bulletin should be shortened to: "During the last month Malta has had six All Clears, one of which lasted for 25 minutes."

Ships bringing urgently needed food and ammunition were dive-bombed and sunk in the harbours, and Malta was faced with starvation. In May, 1942, Spitfires arrived; but although raids became less intense the food situation became worse. A few ships which managed to battle their way through to the beleaguered island in August brought some relief, but it was not until after the battle of El Alamein in November that the first convoy entered Valetta's Grand Harbour undamaged and the grim ordeal was over.



"Won't there be searchlights?..."

She has never known a world without searchlights. Growing up in the greatest war of all time, she does not even know what peace was like.

You are anxious to ensure that once this war is over, she makes up for the loss of so much childhood joy. You will look to her health first and make sure that 'Milk of Magnesia' is your standby — never absent from the medicine cabinet. In the happier days ahead, as now, 'Milk of Magnesia' will keep her fit and free from stomach troubles.

'MILK OF MAGNESIA'

"Milk of Magnesia" is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of magnesium



It's never any trouble to get them to take their HALIBORANGE

Give children their Halibut Liver Oil this pleasant, easy way. Juice of fresh, ripe oranges masks the taste of Halibut Liver Oil and makes Haliborange delicious and gives them vitamins A, C and D all in one! Haliborange will help your family to retain summertime health right through the rain, fog and cold of winter. Taken in addition to the ordinary daily diet, it ensures that the system is having adequate vitamins A, C and D to maintain health at concert pitch.

Each teaspoonful of Haliborange contains 1950 units of vitamin A, 280 units of vitamin D, and 7 mg. of Ascorbic Acid (vitamin C).

From CHEMISTS ONLY 2/6 a bottle

Made in England by Allen & Hanburys, Ltd

HALIBORANGE

the nicest way of taking
HALIBUT LIVER OIL

Here is YOUR chance to help!

JOIN the Children's League of Pity—the Junior Branch of the NATIONAL SOCIETY for the PREVENTION of CRUELTY to CHILDREN (President: H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth) — which is stopping ignorant and cruel parents from neglecting and ill-treating children.

Its objects are:

To give younger people an opportunity of helping unfortunate children throughout the land.

To do this by giving up something for others and not by collecting money by canvassing. Membership of the League gives a sound sense of responsibility and is an education in good citizenship.



Every member who gives 10/- is awarded this splendid badge. It is a great privilege to wear it and to make other children happy.

Why not write to the Secretary for full details?

THE CHILDREN'S LEAGUE of PITY

17, VICTORY HOUSE, LEICESTER SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.2.

May we send a speaker to your school to tell you how our inspectors help these less fortunate children?

THE BRAN TUB

SO THOUGHTFUL

"BOBBY, have you done as I told you and shared the crackers I gave you with Betty?"

"Oh, yes! And I took the toys because I like them, and I gave Betty all the mottoes because she is so fond of reading."

Nature News

THE first of the winter lambs are arriving.

Many different shells are thrown up by the stormy seas and also quantities of bladderwrack seaweed, and unusual shells to which sea-moss is clinging.

Jacko Brings Home the Yule Log



ONE morning after a heavy fall of snow, Jacko and Chimp were pulling their sledge through the woods when they saw part of a tree trunk. "Ah!" cried Jacko, "this is just what we need for the Christmas Yule logs." So they tied it to the sledge and set off home pulling their treasure. When they came to the hill leading to the village, they decided that they could ride down, and mounting the log they went racing down, closely followed by Bouncer. Mrs Jacko, of course, was delighted with their load, and proved it with some hot mince-pies.

Seasonable Advice

SHUN that man who never laughs, who dislikes music or the glad face of a child.

SEEING DOUBLE

WITH a needle make two clean clear holes one-sixteenth of an inch apart in a piece of paper. Hold the paper close to the eye and look through the holes at the head of a pin. Two separate images will be plainly seen. If you have three holes, arranged as a triangle, and then look through these at a pin you will get three images.

A TOPICAL RIDDLE

MY first is in mince-meat but not in pie,
My second's in stocking, but not in tie,
My third is in greeting, but not in card,
My fourth is in carol but not in bard.
My whole is a season the children love.
The symbol it stands for is often a dove.

Answer next week

Safety First

THE end of the slow-country journey came at last. As he left the station the weary traveller said to the ticket collector:

"Your railway seems to believe in safety first."

"Yes, sir," answered the railwayman cheerfully. "This line was built nearly fifty years ago, and we have never had a collision of any kind."

"Is that so? How many trains do you run?"

"Only this one," was the reply.

The Children's Hour

Here are details of the BBC programmes from Wednesday, December 20, to Tuesday, December 26.

WEDNESDAY, 5.20 The Kidnapping of Father Christmas, a Toy-town story by S. G. Hulme Beaman. 5.50 Prayers, and Christmas carols by Bristol schoolchildren.

THURSDAY, 5.20 Kidnapped, by Robert Louis Stevenson; Part 2.

FRIDAY, 5.20 The Magic Bed-knob, by Mary Norton, adapted in three parts by Peter Watts, and produced by Josephine Plummer. Part 3—The Island.

SATURDAY, 5.20 How the Christmas Tree got its Decora-

STUNNING

"IN your advertisements you call this the best hotel in the town," said the dissatisfied client.

"Yes, sir," replied the manager; "there is no doubt about that."

"Then I can only say that it is a terrible blow for the town."

A MERRY MONTH

O MERRY, merry, merry is December time,
When the dusks are long and the daylight brief,
When the silver-winged traveller scatters his rime,
And we wake to a wonder past belief;
When the red-breasted carollers brighter glow
As they sing in the snow—the snow!

FARMER GRAY EXPLAINS

The Ferocious Water Shrew. On the bank of the stream Don saw a small animal. Its coat was like black velvet, its underparts were white.

Entering the clear water it dived to the bottom, where it ran about at amazing speed, in quest of food. A Minnow was chased, and cornered beneath a large stone, under which the hunter thrust his long snout; needle-like teeth destroyed the Minnow.

"It was a Water Shrew," said Farmer Gray on hearing of the event. "It digests its food so quickly that it must eat every two or three hours, which explains the haste and ferocity of its hunting."

Other Worlds

IN the evening Venus is in the south-west and Saturn and Uranus are in the south-east. In the morning Jupiter is in the south-east and Saturn is in the south-west. The picture shows the



Moon as it may be seen at 8 p.m. on Saturday, December 23.

HIDDEN PRESENTS

In the following verse are concealed the names of six presents which may be seen on a Christmas tree.

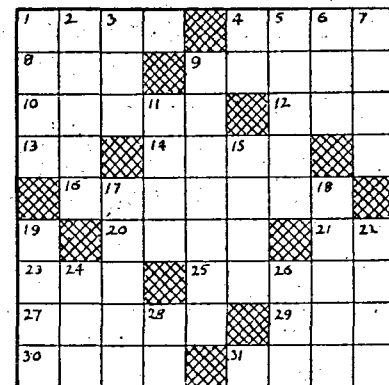
WHEN Stanley Pratt let out
At young Orlando Lloyd,
Stan kept his head, but young Orlando was annoyed.
The tantrum petered out.
One tried to tease the other.
"There's 'Dumbo' at the flicks.
Let's go," said Stanley's brother.

Answer next week

Cross Word Puzzle

Reading Across: 1 Seen at Christmas, mostly on cards. 4 This seaweater walks sideways. 8 A clawed foot. 9 Superior to. 10 To turn away from. 12 Adult males. 13 Chemical symbol for sodium. 14 A jot or tittle. 16 A northern rodent which migrates in hordes. 20 A kind of dam. 21 Pronoun. 23 Employ. 25 A horselike animal with stripes. 27 Pithy. 29 Everyone. 30 A trial. 31 The Celtic language spoken in the Highlands.

Reading Down: 1 The spread of an arch between abutments. 2 Maritime. 3 To be bound to pay. 4 Companion of the Order of the Bath. 5 Citizen of an ancient Empire. 6 Latin for Hail! 7 Crooked. 9 To reduce to atoms. 11 Hoar frost. 15 To fatigue. 17 Pitchers. 18 Sisters. 19 To sink a golf ball in the hole. 22 A story. 24 To perceive. 26 An obstruction. 28 Saint.



Asterisks indicate abbreviations. Answer next week

THE LAST HELPING

"IF I had a Christmas pudding," said the master, "and gave a quarter to John, a quarter to George, and kept half for myself, what would be left?"

"Please, sir, the plate."

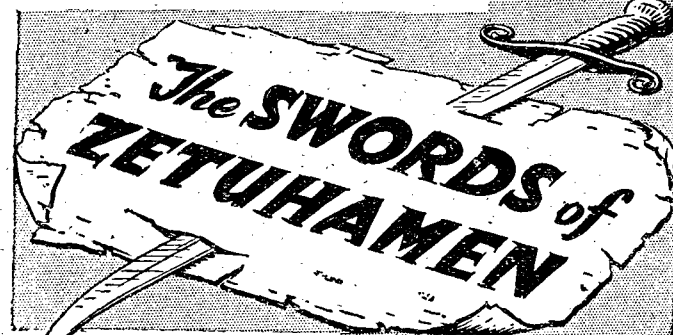
Christmas Dinner Riddles

WHAT is most like half a mince pie? The other half.

What birds work very hard at Christmas feasts? Swallows.

What letter does a turkey hate? A; for it turns roost into roast.

THE THREE MUSTARDEERS PARRY



A FLASH of lightning ripped through the leaden clouds. Then, as though eager to be released, the rain came down, as Roger described it, in sheets. Immediately the Three Mustardeers dashed for the nearest shelter. It was the doorway of a second-hand bookseller.

Mary, interested, suggested they glance over the books to be seen through the open door. Scanning the shelves, she saw a quaintly-bound volume entitled, "The Swords of Zetuhamen." It was on a rather high shelf, and she reached to take it down. But she could not move it. She tried again. Standing on tip-toe, she tugged at the book, gripping the separating panel of the shelving. To the Mustardeers' astonishment, a section of the shelving opened, like a door, outward. "By Jove!" exclaimed Roger and Jim together. "By pulling the book and pushing



that panel at the same time, you must have worked a combination spring." They looked round the shop. There seemed to be no one in charge. "Good," cried Roger, "the coast's clear. Let's explore." They tip-toed through the opening, and made their way cautiously along a narrow passage. "Listen," whispered Roger. A door ahead was slightly ajar, and through it they heard a voice. "The meeting has decided. To-night the Swords of Zetuhamen strike. Destroy — X, shall we call him — yes, X, to-night and Britain will find it difficult to

explain his assassination. It will be the first step towards the disruption of Allied friendship, and in the ensuing dispute will come our opportunity for the working of our plans." At that moment, Roger felt a hand on his shoulder. "What are you doing here?" hissed a voice behind them, full of menace. Roger quick as a flash, bent forward sharply and kicked out backwards. There was a yelp of pain. "Quick," he yelled. "Let's get out." The man behind grabbed, but Jim punched him in the stomach. As he gasped for breath, they shot past him. Out into the shop again, they swung the panel into place, and as Roger and Jim leaned heavily against it, Mary, on Roger's instructions, phoned 999. There was now a heavy banging on the back of the panel. The prisoners had a bang of timber with which they were attempting to break the panel. At last, their improvised battering-ram succeeded in breaking a hole, and as the timber was withdrawn a hand holding a gun came through. The Mustardeers, however, dashed to the side, out of range, as the revolver fired. More banging and the panel again splintered. Then, at that moment, a police car pulled up at the shop door with a screech of brakes. Quickly the police heard the Mustardeers' story. They opened the panel, at the same time warning the prisoners that the game was up. Six men came out, and were handcuffed immediately.

Later, at Headquarters, while the Mustardeers were being thanked for their work, they were told, "The Swords of Zetuhamen are a Secret Society with members in several countries. Their aim is to introduce a weird and ghastly form of Government for the whole world. Up to now, they have been harmless, but their proposed killing of Mr. X, whose identity I must not disclose, even to you, would be decidedly harmful to the foundations of Peace. You have done good work."

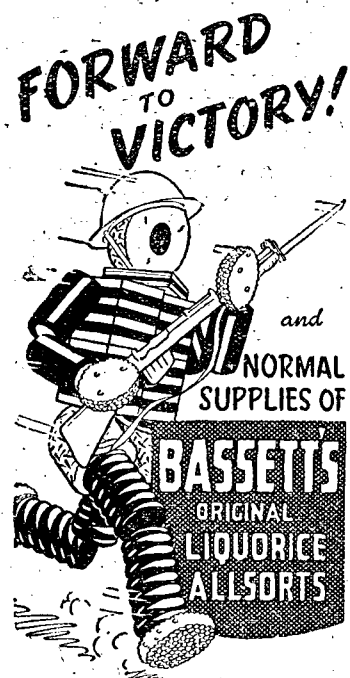
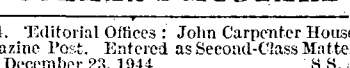
SAID JIM: "The pleasure's ours, as the boys said when they found their Mother had put Mustard on their meat sandwiches."

THE MUSTARDEERS' OATH

We will have mustard whenever we can get it. It makes good food taste better. It helps us to keep healthy and strong.

We will have Mustard—

COLMAN'S MUSTARD



Apologies to customers unable to obtain BASSETT'S—due to Zoning